

## Patient information factsheet

# Hearing aid services for children

We have given you this factsheet because your child has been diagnosed with a permanent hearing loss and is going to be fitted with hearing aids. It explains what to expect at your child's appointments and provides more information on hearing aids. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of our team.

### Hearing aids

Your child's hearing aid(s) will have two parts:

- the hearing aid itself
- the earmould

These two parts are connected by a thin plastic tube, which sends the sound from the hearing aid to the earmould. The earmould then sends the sound to the ear.

There are several different types of hearing aids available. We will choose the most suitable hearing aid(s) for your child's needs.

All hearing aids are battery-powered. We give tamper-proof battery locks to all children under the age of five, and to any children with additional needs that may make them more likely to swallow a battery. If you would like a tamper-proof battery lock for your child, we will be happy to provide one. You may want to consider this if your child is in regular contact with young children or children with additional needs.

### Earmould impressions

At your child's first appointment, we will take earmould impressions (a cast of the shape of your child's ear). We will then send your child's earmould impressions to a laboratory to be made into their earmould(s). Standard earmoulds are made of clear plastic, but they can also be made in a range of colours or can have a picture insert.

As your child grows, we will need to take new earmould impressions on a regular basis to account for the new shape of their ear. This may need to be as often as every few weeks for babies, but this will become less frequent as they get older. Some junior school and most secondary school-aged children will only need new earmoulds once a year.

### Fitting the hearing aid(s)

At the fitting appointment, we will:

- set up the hearing aid(s) for your child's individual hearing levels and needs
- explain how hearing aids work and how to care for them

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Occasionally we may carry out some extra tests to check your child's hearing when they are wearing their hearing aid(s).

We will give your child the following items to take home:

- their hearing aid(s)
- an information booklet on how to use, manage and look after their hearing aid(s)
- boxes to store their hearing aid(s)
- spare batteries
- a care kit with accessories to help them maintain their hearing aid(s)

## Educational support

We may offer you a referral to a local specialist teacher advisory service. This service provides information, advice and support for parents, carers and school staff. If you agree to a referral, the service will contact you directly to arrange an initial meeting.

## Follow-up appointments

Initially, we will review your child's hearing ability every three to six months, or more often if they are a baby. At your child's review appointments, we will monitor their progress and build up information about their hearing levels. Eventually, your child will only require annual reviews, with short appointments in between for earmould impressions if needed.

## Getting used to hearing aids

Hearing aids do not restore normal hearing, but with consistent use and practice, they will help your child to hear sounds more clearly. Our aim is to ensure that your child has access to all the sounds they need to develop their speech.

It may take some time for your child to adjust to wearing their hearing aid(s). In this case, we recommend that you build up use gradually. We will give you tips and ideas for encouraging your child to use their hearing aid(s) at their fitting appointment. Eventually most children find themselves wearing the hearing aid(s) all day every day. Please be aware that hearing aids have a feature called 'data logging' which records information about how the hearing aids are used, such as how long they are being worn each day.

As a parent or carer, it is important that you show a positive attitude to the hearing aid(s). We understand that parents and carers need to get used to hearing aids too, so we will provide as much support as you need in the first few weeks and months.

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Audiology and hearing therapy department  
Level A  
The Royal South Hants Hospital  
Brintons Terrace  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
SO14 0YG

Telephone: **023 8120 2997**

Email: [rshaudiology@uhs.nhs.uk](mailto:rshaudiology@uhs.nhs.uk)

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## Useful links

[www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/childhood-deafness/hearing-aids](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/childhood-deafness/hearing-aids)

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